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Hold	+5%/-5% variation in share price		

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R3819-02

**Telecommunications &
Broadband Services****Regulatory Update***Type of Report***INDUSTRY REPORT**

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August 22, 2002**THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN
THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES**

- Since our May report, the FCC has granted 271s in four states: Georgia and Louisiana for BellSouth and Maine and New Jersey for Verizon. Applications for seventeen states' 271s are before the FCC now. By year-end we expect all of Verizon to be covered by 271s. We expect Qwest to have 271s in all but one or two states (Minnesota and Arizona being the ones we expect to lag). We expect BellSouth to have all its 271s except Florida. Finally, we expect SBC to add California late in 2002, but do not believe the Ameritech states will get their 271s until the first half of 2003.
- As part of the 271 process, UNE rates since May have been reduced in many states, most notably in the Qwest Region, but also in SBC and BellSouth states. We expect some more UNE reductions (Massachusetts, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are pending for Verizon, for example) but expect the pace to slow given how much UNE rates have decreased and given that the 271 process that drives some of the cuts is nearing its end.
- For the CLECs, the lower UNE rates present the opportunity to enter the local market with minimal up-front investment. It is not clear, however, whether some of the more troubled companies, like WorldCom, will be able to take full advantage. We view UNEP as being positive for the IXC's, particularly AT&T, but do not believe that it is enough to stem the declining revenues and profitability of the consumer long-distance market.
- From the RBOC-investor's perspective, UNEP presents several problems. One is the reduction in revenues that comes from converting retail to wholesale revenues. The other is the pricing compression that comes from the RBOCs' own attempts to restructure their prices to compete with the new entrants. Finally, there is the exposure during a period when an RBOC cannot yet enter long-distance, but the IXC's have begun to enter its local market. Among the RBOCs, SBC is by far the most exposed. In California and in the Ameritech states, it has super-low UNEP prices and no ability to counter an IXC's entry with an all-distance plan. It is possible that Verizon will also see some meaningful share loss in the next few months, but we do not see the IXC's being as focused on it as they are on SBC, particularly in California.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES	3
APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO UNEP REPORT, MAY TO AUGUST, 2002	7
SUMMARY OF RBOC CHANGES	8
COMPANIES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT	9

INDEX OF EXHIBITS

1: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - ALL RBOCS	10
1A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - ALL RBOCS	11
2: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - BELL SOUTH	12
2A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - BELL SOUTH	13
3: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - QWEST	14
3A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - QWEST	15
4: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - SBC	16
4A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - SBC	17
5: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - VERIZON	18
5A: UNBUNDLED NETWORK ELEMENT RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - VERIZON	19

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Ratings

Strong Buy

Outperform market near-term and long-term by over 10%

Market Outperform

Outperform market long-term by over 10%

Market Perform

Perform in-line with market (+ or - 5%)

Market Underperform

Underperform market by over 10%



THE STATUS OF 271 AND UNE-PLATFORM IN THE REGIONAL BELLS' TERRITORIES

Over three months have passed since we last published our report "The Status of 271 and UNE-Platform in the Regional Bells' Territories". Given the recent flood of 271 filings with the FCC and the concomitant changes to UNE-Platform (UNEP) rates made by individual state commissions, we thought it timely to provide an update.

- The flood of applications for in-Region long distance entry under section 271 of the Telecom Act (271) is reaching its crest. Fourteen 271s have been granted to the Regional Bells (RBOCs) so far, and the FCC has applications for seventeen more before it right now: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina for BellSouth; Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, Montana, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming for Qwest; New Hampshire, Delaware, and Virginia for Verizon.
- By year-end 2002, we expect 271s to cover all BellSouth states except Florida, all Qwest states except Minnesota and possibly Arizona, and all Verizon states. SBC has a good chance of having California granted by year-end, and a slight chance of having Michigan granted as well, with the rest of the Ameritech states likely to slip into the first half of 2003.
- As the RBOCs have prepared to submit their 271s, they and their state commissions have made changes to their unbundled network element (UNE) prices. While commissions do occasionally change UNE prices independently of the 271 process—as New York did earlier this year and as Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas and Pennsylvania are doing now—most changes have been made as part of the 271 process. Thus, both because UNE rates have been lowered sharply in most states over the last year and because the 271 process is ending, we expect a slower rate of change to UNE prices over the next year or two than we have seen in the last few months.
- The actual implementation of UNEP accelerated in the last few months, as competitive carriers (CLECs) have focused more on this market. WorldCom's MCI division, in partnership with Z-Tel launched its Neighborhood Plan in April. AT&T has added local UNEP-based service in six states to its original two since March of 2002 and will probably add another two states this year. In early 2002, AT&T was offering UNEP-based local service only in New York and Texas. Since March, it has added Michigan, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, California, and New Jersey. It has indicated that it will also enter Pennsylvania and Massachusetts this year. We expect it to push hard in California, where it will fight hardest to protect its long-distance market. WorldCom's MCI division introduced its Neighborhood plan in April and appeared ready to pursue entry in at least the urban zones throughout most of the country. Entry by these long-distance carriers (IXCs) has been partly in response to potential entry by the RBOCs into the long distance market in a given state and partly in response to lower UNE prices. Given the financial problems at WorldCom and the changes in AT&T's structure and management as it merges its Broadband



unit with Comcast it is somewhat difficult to predict how hard they will push UNEP. We expect some backing off on WorldCom's part, and a harder push in a small number of states on AT&T's.

- At least in theory, the greatest exposure to changes in UNE prices is to SBC. AT&T just began deploying UNEP in California, where SBC will not be able to respond on the long-distance side till around year-end 2002, at best. AT&T is also in Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio, where it is unlikely that SBC will be able to respond on the long-distance side till sometime in the first half of 2003. As we indicate below, UNEP discounts are greatest overall in the SBC Region. BellSouth is seeing UNEP-based entry primarily in Georgia and Florida, but AT&T has not yet entered Florida. Florida is the only state in which we do not expect BellSouth to have a 271 till late first quarter 2003. Qwest's rates have recently dropped in a number of states, so that the Regional average UNEP rate has dropped from \$28.21 to \$23.97. However, we do not believe that entry into Qwest's territory is a high priority for the IXCs at any price. Verizon's rate at \$20.23 is the second lowest on a Regional basis, but that rate is relatively stable vs. May of 2002. It is also worth noting that Verizon has not lost much market share since rates in New York were lowered in January. AT&T has indicated that it will enter Pennsylvania and Massachusetts this year, but neither the timing nor the level of effort in those states is clear to us.
- The Supreme Court has affirmed the FCC's right to designate TELRIC (Total Element Long Run Incremental Cost) as the methodology by which UNE prices are set. More broadly, in its May 2002 Verizon Communications v. FCC decision, the Supreme Court appeared to affirm the FCC's right to designate any method other than rate-of-return, which is specifically precluded by the Telecom Act, for the purpose of setting UNE prices.
- The long-term survival of UNEP is, nevertheless, in question. In its May 2002 Verizon decision, the Supreme Court reaffirmed the "necessary and impair" standard, which it had already highlighted in its January 1999 Iowa Utilities Board v. FCC decision. On May 24th, in its USTA v. FCC decision, the D.C. Circuit of Appeals remanded to the FCC the 1999 UNE order in which the FCC attempted to refine the list of required UNEs in accordance with the Supreme Court's "necessary and impair" standard. The D.C. Circuit also vacated the FCC's line-sharing order. The FCC has appealed back to the full D.C. Circuit some aspects of the court's decision.
- All of these judicial decisions will have an impact on the triennial review which was initiated by the FCC in December of 2001 to decide which UNEs still meet the "necessary and impair" test. The triennial review was expected to conclude this year. If the D.C. Circuit does accept the FCC's appeal, we believe it is unlikely that the FCC will issue an order in the triennial review till after the court rules, most likely some time next spring. Aside from delaying the conclusion, the various court decisions are likely to drive the FCC toward a more granular analysis than it had done in the past. That was the bent of the current FCC anyway, but the D.C. decision reinforces it. For example, we would not be surprised to see switching removed as an element in some



markets fairly quickly and in others over some longer transition period. Other elements also might be removed over time in some geographic and customer markets. If the FCC decides to take granularity down to the wire-center level, it may leave actual implementation in the hands of the states, but with fairly tight rules to guide that implementation. In the context of UNEP, what is significant about the removal of an individual element is that it makes it necessary for the CLEC to do some work to reassemble the line when it inserts its own equipment. That will make it more difficult to move large numbers of customers rapidly. Thus, the timing and outcome of the triennial review is very important both to the CLECs/IXCs who use UNEP and to the RBOCs who are wholesaling lines to those CLECs/IXCs at deep discounts.

- The actual financial impact of UNEP on either the RBOCs or their competitors is, of course, what investors care about. Unfortunately, it is difficult to quantify because it depends so much on the companies' strategies. The more CLECs are able to cream-skim in a given market, the better their own margins and the greater the damage to the RBOC. The CLECs' ability to cream-skim, in turn, depends not only on the CLECs' own strategies, but on the RBOCs' win-back efforts, which often include the introduction of new pricing plans and the RBOCs' ability to offer all-distance plans. Thus, damage to the RBOCs' financials comes not only from the conversion of retail revenues to wholesale revenues, but from a broader repricing in response to competition. The offset from long distance appears to be fairly minor, at this point. Although ultimately all-distance customers may be "stickier" than those who use only one service, initially both sides are likely to spend more on marketing to fight churn than they did before.
- Our May 1, 2002 report included one effort at such an analysis. It found that UNEP creates a discount of about 19% to 42% below retail residential revenue. Using the same retail rates, those discounts would now range from 24% to 50%. Another way to look at the issue is to use the FCC's rate reference book, which relies, in turn, on TNS bill-harvesting data. According to this data, average residential spending per household on local service is \$426 per year and on long-distance \$176 per year. Assuming 1.2 lines per household, that would equate to about \$30 per line in local revenue plus about \$4 per line in access charges for a total revenue per line of about \$33-\$34. That figure falls within the range of \$30-\$34 for retail consumer revenue that we had estimated in May, although both calculations present potential problems. For the TNS data, specifically, it is not clear whether taxes and Universal Service Fund contributions which an RBOC would simply pass through to the government are included in the revenue. With that caveat, we are using \$33.50 as a national average residential rate. That leads to UNEP discounts on a Region-wide basis of 27% in BellSouth, 28% in Qwest, 48% in SBC, and 40% in Verizon. The TNS numbers also indicate that the RBOC would need to gain more than three long-distance customers to make up for the revenues from any local customer it loses (\$474 of local plus access revenue vs. \$128 of long-distance revenue net of access). And—given the different margin structures of the industries—it needs more than that to make up for the lost cash flow. Of course, to the extent that an IXC can capture small business customers whose



retail spending is higher than that of consumers, the damage to the RBOC is greater. For some time, at least, while the industry restructures itself into an "all distance" market, the UNEP vs. 271 game is likely to be "negative-sum," with both the RBOCs' and IXC's profits hurt by lower revenue and higher marketing costs.



APPENDIX

STATEWIDE FULL UNEP (DEM) - MAY AND AUGUST 2002

Changes in methodology and corrections of errors:

- We changed our MOU (minutes of use) assumption from 1200 to 1411, to account for toll minutes, based on footnote 252 of the FCC's Pennsylvania order.
- For the columns that calculate full UNEP based on DEM (dial-equipment minutes), there is no change. Thus, for comparison, we are showing full UNEP based on DEM for both May and August in our tables.
- We corrected an error in the formula that calculated amortized non-recurring charges for Verizon's MA, NH, NY, DE, PA. For NV, KS, MO, OK and TX, we now have some non-recurring charges that we did not have in our last iteration. For Maryland, we are no longer using the compliance rates that we used in May. Statewide loop rate averages changed in several BellSouth, Qwest and Verizon states, though the actual rates did not, based on new estimates of the distributions of lines per zone: KY, LA, MS, SC, NM, ME, RI, PA.
- Once we assemble our data, we ask all the relevant state commissions, RBOCs and the two major IXC's to comment on its accuracy. We received specific feedback on the accuracy of our tables from all the RBOCs and many states.

Other findings:

- UNE prices continue to trend down.
- For all RBOCs the full UNEP average (assuming DEM) dropped by 10% from that which we reported in May.
- On a national basis, full UNEP average (assuming DEM) now stands at \$20.28 vs. the \$22.58 average we reported in May.
- The range is a high of \$24.38 for BellSouth and a low of \$17.50 for SBC, within the range we predicted in our May report.
- SBC experienced a roughly 20% decline (with an even sharper decline in California) and Qwest experienced a roughly 15% decline in full UNEP (DEM) average since our May report.
- The RBOC-wide total switching and transport average dropped 21%, from the \$8.34 we reported in May to \$6.59 in August.
- Several states' full UNEP (DEM) price appear to increase or actually increased from that which we reported in May. In some cases, as noted above, we changed the non-recurring formula. In some cases we changed the distribution



of loops among zones, thus changing the average. In a few cases, rates actually rose. In AL, FL, LA, MS and SC, there is now a cross-connect charge that is part of the non-recurring charges that we amortize. In Oregon, the port rate increased slightly.

- Anna Maria Kovacs, Ph.D., CFA

— Kristin L. Burns, Ph.D.

Gregory S. Vitale



COMPANIES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Price</u>
BellSouth	BLS	\$25.44
SBC	SBC	\$27.89
Qwest	Q	\$2.82
Verizon	VZ	\$31.18
AT&T	T	\$11.79
WorldCom's MCI	WCOLQ	\$0.12
Z-Tel	ZTEL	\$1.44
Comcast	CMCSK	\$22.99
Dow Jones Industrial	DJIA	8,887.87
S&P 500 Stock Index	SPX	941.06



Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including lawsuits, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. (CAM estimates)

11

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports, CCM estimates

Source: Company Financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. CCM estimates.

EXPENSE ANALYSIS BY STATE - LOCAL CARRIER MAINTENANCE SUMMARY - BLUE SOUTH

STATE	LOCAL TERMINATING SWITCHING (per month)	LOCAL ORIGINATING SWITCHING (per month)	LOCAL TERMINATING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	LOCAL ORIGINATING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	Assumes LTH originating minutes	Assumes DTM terminating minutes	Assumes LTH and Transport (per month)	Assumes DTM Other Switching and Transport (per month)	Assumes LTH and Transport (per month)	Assumes DTM Other Switching and Transport (per month)	AMOUNT NRC (per month)	TOTAL DTM (per line, per month)
ALABAMA												
Alabama	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
FLORIDA												
Florida	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
GEORGIA												
Georgia	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
KENTUCKY												
Kentucky	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
LOUISIANA												
Louisiana	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
MISSISSIPPI												
Mississippi	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
NORTH CAROLINA												
North Carolina	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
SOUTH CAROLINA												
South Carolina	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55
TENNESSEE												
Tennessee	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55	\$17.55

Source: Company Financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. CCM estimates

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMs reports. CAH estimates.

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, microeconomic agreements and ARMS reports. CVM estimates.

EXHIBIT 4 - SUMMARY OF THE COST OF THE TELEPHONE MARKET SURVEY - NERC

STATE	DENSITY ZONES	ACCESS LINES (thous)	% of TOTAL ACCESS LINES	TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)		TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)		TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)		TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)		TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	
				Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes	Assumes 1000 originating minutes		
Illinois													
	WID ASP	3,776	100%	\$9.51	\$6.15	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$16.94	\$16.94	\$16.94	
	metro			\$5.59									
	suburban			\$3.92									
	total			\$11.10									
Indiana													
	WID ASP	3,106	100%	\$8.01	\$1.85	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$8.01									
	suburban			\$8.15									
	total			\$16.16									
Michigan													
	WID ASP	5,679	100%	\$8.47	\$1.50	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$8.47									
	suburban			\$8.73									
	total			\$17.20									
Ohio													
	WID ASP	4,106	100%	\$7.01	\$7.40	\$1.15	\$0.64	\$0.64	\$0.64	\$13.93	\$13.93	\$13.93	
	metro			\$5.91									
	suburban			\$7.92									
	total			\$13.83									
Wisconsin													
	WID ASP	3,991	100%	\$10.90	\$11.17	\$10.13	\$0.06	\$0.06	\$0.06	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$10.90									
	suburban			\$10.90									
	total			\$21.80									
California													
	WID ASP	10,613	100%	\$5.91	\$6.77	\$0.11	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$5.91									
	suburban			\$5.91									
	total			\$11.82									
Nevada													
	WID ASP	340	100%	\$11.17	\$11.17	\$10.03	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$11.17									
	suburban			\$11.17									
	total			\$22.34									
Arkansas													
	WID ASP	1,007	100%	\$1.09	\$5.75	\$0.16	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$10.96	\$10.96	\$10.96	
	metro			\$1.09									
	suburban			\$1.09									
	total			\$2.18									
Kansas													
	WID ASP	1,337	100%	\$3.30	\$5.75	\$0.16	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$10.96	\$10.96	\$10.96	
	metro			\$3.30									
	suburban			\$3.30									
	total			\$6.60									
Missouri													
	WID ASP	1,337	100%	\$3.30	\$5.75	\$0.16	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$10.96	\$10.96	\$10.96	
	metro			\$3.30									
	suburban			\$3.30									
	total			\$6.60									
Oklahoma													
	WID ASP	1,337	100%	\$3.30	\$5.75	\$0.16	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$1.79	\$10.96	\$10.96	\$10.96	
	metro			\$3.30									
	suburban			\$3.30									
	total			\$6.60									
Texas													
	WID ASP	10,118	100%	\$3.11	\$6.36	\$0.14	\$1.74	\$1.74	\$1.74	\$11.91	\$11.91	\$11.91	
	metro			\$3.11									
	suburban			\$3.11									
	total			\$6.22									

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports. CCM estimates

Source: Company financial reports and circulation figures in the footnotes.

TABLE 5: FURTHER DETAILED 2002 FULL-UNEP RATE COMPARISON MATRIX SUMMARY - VERL COM

STATE	DENSITY ZONES	ACCESS LINES (000s)	% of TOTAL ACCESS LINES	COORD RATE (per month)	TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	TOTAL SWITCHING AND TRANSPORT (per month)	ALL OTHER (per month)	ALL OTHER (per month)	FULL-UNEP ORIGINATING AND TERMINATING	FULL-UNEP ORIGINATING AND TERMINATING	MAY 2002 FULL-UNEP ORIGINATING AND TERMINATING
					Assumes FULL originating minutes	Assumes DEM minutes	Assumes FULL originating minutes	Assumes DEM minutes	Assumes FULL originating minutes	Assumes DEM minutes	
					SUBTOTALS				TOTALS		
					KEY USEPA						
ETC NYNEX											
Maine	Avg	060	7%	\$16.18	\$1.75	\$5.75	\$0.18	\$0.17	\$5.61	\$5.00	\$22.18
	1			\$11.11							
	2			\$11.11							
	3			\$18.75							
Massachusetts	Avg	1,500	10%	\$11.98	\$17.91	\$10.26	\$0.19	\$0.18	\$5.08	\$5.50	\$55.77
	1			\$7.51							
	2			\$11.11							
	3			\$16.17							
	4			\$20.01							
New Hampshire	Avg	875	7%	\$18.10	\$7.21	\$6.01	\$0.16	\$0.18	\$5.77	\$5.51	\$50.77
	1			\$11.97							
	2			\$16.01							
	3			\$25.00							
New York	Avg	17,551	77%	\$17.19	\$6.11	\$5.59	\$0.08	\$0.08	\$11.98	\$17.17	\$17.15
	1			\$7.10							
	2			\$11.11							
	3			\$15.51							
Rhode Island	Avg	687	7%	\$11.91	\$6.56	\$5.71	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$5.81	\$19.70	\$55.07
	1			\$11.19							
	2			\$15.11							
	3			\$19.11							
Vermont	Avg	178	1%	\$11.17	\$17.71	\$10.51	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$7.16	\$7.09	\$55.09
	1			\$7.17							
	2			\$11.17							
	3			\$21.61							
ETC BELL ATLANTIC											
DC	Avg	1,019	8%	\$10.18	\$9.91	\$6.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5.75	\$16.81	\$16.81
Delaware	Avg	611	7%	\$17.10	\$6.68	\$8.09	\$0.69	\$0.66	\$7.17	\$9.81	\$50.11
	1			\$11.11							
	2			\$16.11							
Maryland	Avg	1,100	9%	\$11.10	\$11.15	\$11.50	\$0.56	\$0.55	\$7.70	\$5.55	\$19.78
	1			\$11.11							
	2			\$17.80							
	3			\$25.96							
	4			\$18.10							
New Jersey	Avg	7,010	77%	\$9.57	\$7.51	\$5.55	\$0.10	\$0.07	\$17.15	\$15.11	\$15.11
	1			\$9.17							
	2			\$9.59							
	3			\$10.91							
Pennsylvania	Avg	7,109	16%	\$11.81	\$6.19	\$5.55	\$0.20	\$0.17	\$5.50	\$19.71	\$19.16
	1			\$10.75							
	2			\$11.09							
	3			\$11.09							
	4			\$16.75							
Virginia	Avg	1,760	7%	\$11.76	\$9.56	\$7.57	\$0.51	\$0.57	\$7.86	\$11.87	\$7.68
	1			\$10.51							
	2			\$16.15							
	3			\$29.10							
West Virginia	Avg	907	7%	\$7.58	\$7.82	\$19.15	\$0.11	\$0.17	\$15.55	\$11.07	\$11.07
	1			\$14.19							
	2			\$22.01							
	3			\$11.14							

Source: Company Financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMIS reports. CCM estimates

Source: Company financial reports and regulatory filings including tariffs, interconnection agreements and ARMS reports, CCMP estimates.

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SBC Communications, Inc. (SBC)

Meeting with SBC CFO highlights key initiatives; no estimate or ratings change.

Analyst Comment
11:05 AM - August 22, 2002
Market Outperformer
Large-Cap Value
Price: US\$28.11
United States
Stock data
52-week range US\$47.34-23.30
Yield 3.8%

Capitalization
Market cap US\$93.5bn
Latest net debt/(cash) -
Free float -
Shares outstanding 3325mn

Price performance

	1M	3M	12M
Absolute	5%	-19%	-35%
Rel to S&P 500	-7%	-7%	-17%

Forecasts/valuation

	2002E	2003E
EPS*	US\$2.30	US\$2.30
GSCOPE EPS*	-	-
GSCOPE P/E	-	-

* May differ from US GAAP

SBC considers fixing the UNE-P mess, as a prime corporate objective. Delayed LD entry in key locations, combined with the lowest UNE-P rates in the country, have uniquely exposed SBC to profit-eroding share loss. Despite this, SBC's CFO Randall Stephenson still sees stable cash flows through aggressive cost cutting, combined with the ability to maintain trends in share repurchases and dividend hikes. Consolidation in wireless is another key objective of SBC. Acknowledging the proliferation of conversations among wireless carriers, Stephenson indicated all talks are still preliminary. In the meantime Cingular is raising prices, sacrificing sub growth, and looking to improve profits.

Full details

WHAT TO DO WITH THE STOCK? We continue our cautious view of telecom, although recent stock price declines make us somewhat less cautious.

Within the group the Bells and rural telcos should provide the best returns. And, within the Bells, we continue to view Verizon as the best choice right now. As management indicates, share loss to UNE-P is going to be quite damaging to SBC. And we believe it will suffer the greatest consequences of this phenomenon among the three Bells. Thus, the valuation premium that SBC trades at relative to Verizon on P/E, EV/EBITDA, and dividend yield is probably not sustainable over the next six months. We continue to use our current EPS estimates of \$2.30 for this year and next.

UNE-P: A BIG PROBLEM WITHOUT LD. SBC has been the most vocal critic of UNE-P, and is working hard to raise prices and diminish the negative effect. In the absence of pervasive long distance approval, UNE-P has been and will continue to be very damaging to SBC. With LD approval in the Ameritech region not likely until the middle or second half of '03, and California not likely until yearend '02, SBC stands quite exposed at the moment. However, we should not extrapolate the SBC experience uniformly to the other RBOCs. No others face the unique combination of low priced UNE-P, high residential rates (in the Ameritech region), big concentrated industrial states, and no LD capability. Thus, we don't see Verizon in particular, and BellSouth to a lesser degree has having the same degree of exposure. So, yes, if an ILEC loses a customer to UNE-P it's a big hit to the bottom line - but it has to lose the customer for the hit to be taken. And in our view VZ and BLS are likely to be able to offset this materially better than SBC over the next year. It should be noted that SBC has been enjoying these same benefits share retention in its states where it has long distance approval. SBC intends to file cost studies in key jurisdictions, using the regulatory path as one attempt at raising rates. In addition, it continues to try to use bundling as aggressively as possible to offset share loss.

WIRELESS CONSOLIDATION: A KEY OBJECTIVE. Newspaper reports have

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exaggerated the speed of wireless consolidation and the progress that has been made to date. However, the desirability of getting a deal done is obvious, and the company acknowledged active conversations. Mr. Stephenson noted that of the two options for deals AWE presents less dilution but greater regulatory and integration hurdles. Voicestream presents higher dilution but far easier regulatory approval and integration. Furthermore, similar to press accounts, he indicated a deal for Voicestream may be impractical without taking in DT as an equity participant (i.e. no all-cash deal). And, importantly, SBC is open to that possibility.

WIRELESS PRICE HIKES, DESPITE SLOWER SUB GROWTH. The healing effects of wireless mergers are not nearly upon us yet. In the meantime, Cingular is taking steps to "heal thyself." The price hikes are geared to boost profitability, even as it sacrifices sub growth. The particular increase in national plan rates announced this week are geared to both reduce off-network roaming costs and slow down the consumption of TDMA network capacity. SBC and BLS are fully expecting their joint venture to experience low to no sub growth as a result of these actions as well as the customer churn that will be stimulated by the WorldCom reseller shift.

CAPEX TO REVENUE SHOULD BE NO HIGHER THAN 15% AND WILL BE LOWER ABSENT GROWTH. There is a broad effort to cut capex in both wireline and wireless operations. In wireline, Stephenson indicated that current thinking is that capex to sales should be no higher than 15%, and that in the current environment it should be no higher than 13%, and yet it is. Thus, further capex cuts should occur. In our view, if demand recovery continues to falter it would not be surprising to see capex to sales fall below the 13% rate, as it has in other countries. On the wireless side, capex cuts are also anticipated. In our view, slower capex spending in wireless is further supported by the prospects of industry consolidation.

COST REDUCTIONS KEY TO MAINTAINING EARNINGS AND BOOSTING MARGINS. SBC sees the margin differential between it and VZ and BLS as indicating an opportunity for further cost cutting. Pointing to opportunities in consolidating call centers, raising efficiencies in network operations, and generally trimming overhead costs, Stephenson is focused and confident in using these steps to help improve margins in the face of share loss.

CALIFORNIA DSL EXPERIENCE GIVES CONFIDENCE IN LONG TERM POTENTIAL. In California, SBC is enjoying the benefits of scale DSL operations, having achieved about 10% penetration so far. As a result, operations are already EBITDA positive and on the trajectory to reach SBC's targeted hurdle rate.

The steps that got California to scale include: an effective self-installation program, low help desk costs, effective churn control (down towards 2-3%), and effective marketing against the cable operators. SBC believes that mass market deployment of DSL will occur, and that tiered offerings are one step in getting there. This will allow lower monthly prices for lower speeds, but should be able to maintain an average monthly price of approximately \$40. This is a little higher than our long term estimate, but directionally our models look at the market in the same way. Due to the absence of long distance approval in California and the Ameritech states, SBC will continue to try to bundle DSL as a way of offsetting share loss, indicating that churn falls 75% for those customers taking DSL on top of their local service.

BLS: US\$ 25.99, SBC: US\$ 28.11, VZ: US\$ 32.35

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